

Connections

February 2010

Missouri Highway Fatalities Hit Record Low

Lowest Number of Highway Fatalities Since 1950

Not since 1950 has Missouri seen so few people killed in highway crashes. For the fourth year in a row, Missouri has reduced its highway fatalities. Currently, the number stands at 872 in 2009 – almost 100 less than in 2008.

“Lives are being saved because the coalition partners are working together – and it’s an exciting thing for Missouri,” said Leanna Depue, director of Highway Safety

and executive committee chair of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety.

Overall, since 2005 traffic deaths decreased 31 percent. The coalition credits a combination of law enforcement, educational efforts, emergency medical services and engineering enhancements as the successful formula for saving lives.

“The work we are doing is making a difference,” said Don Hillis, director of System



Missouri State Highway Patrol Superintendent Colonel James F. Keathley announced that traffic fatalities have decreased for the fourth year in a row at a press conference Jan. 19 in Jefferson City.

Then and Now How Missouri Life in 1950 Compares with 2009		
	1950	2009
Population	3,954,653	5,987,580
Average price per gallon of gas	\$.20	\$2.73
Registered vehicles	1,261,420	4,865,726
Total public mileage	112,350	129,715
System mileage	18,947	33,685
Traffic fatalities	889	872

Management. “MoDOT’s engineering advances such as median guard cable, rumble stripes, smoother pavement, better and brighter signing, striping and reflective markings are all helping to save lives.”

Since 1950, many things have changed. Missouri’s total population has increased by more than 66 percent, the number of system miles has risen by 56 percent and the number of registered vehicles has quadrupled. Even the cost of a gallon of gas has gone from a mere 20 cents to an average of \$2.73. But the most important number to agencies trying to save lives has now decreased to even less than it was in 1950 at 889.

“When you consider the dramatic differences between now and 1950, it is truly

amazing that we can have almost the same number of fatalities and injuries as we did back then,” Depue said.

In 2007, Missouri recorded fewer than 1,000 fatalities for the first time in more than 15 years. This allowed the coalition to meet an ambitious goal one year early. In October 2008, the coalition announced a new goal for traffic fatality reductions at 850 or less by 2012. The last time Missouri reached less than 850 fatalities was 1949.

“We actually came really close in 2009 to meeting our goal of 850 traffic fatalities by 2012, and if the current reduction in traffic fatalities continues, we’ll be well under that by then,” Depue said.

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MoDOT Found to be Adminstrating DBE Program Properly

Federal Highway Administration Praises Efforts; Recommends Future Improvements

An inquiry by the Federal Highway Administration has found no evidence of discrimination in MoDOT’s administration of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program. Rather, MoDOT was found to have several safeguards in place to ensure an unbiased and fair approach toward minority- and women-owned businesses.

“In summary, FHWA found no evidence of discrimination in MoDOT’s administration of the DBE program. Goal setting and contract awards processes are designed to

prevent discrimination with safeguards in place to ensure an unbiased approach to the enforcement of the DBE Program,” according to the FHWA report.

Recent efforts include community roundtable discussions for projects such as the New I-64 and the Mississippi River Bridge in St. Louis and kcalCON, an upgrade of the I-29/I-35 connector route into downtown Kansas City. Two summits were recently held to discuss challenges and find solutions for bringing more DBE

firms, especially minority businesses, into the heavy highway construction industry.

The FHWA commended MoDOT for taking proactive approaches, such as preparing to conduct a new statewide availability and disparity study, improving DBE participation in projects and in developing a new contract special provision to ensure prime contractors understand the expectation in meeting DBE goals on major projects.

“We appreciate the FHWA’s in-depth review of our DBE program,” said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. “We will not only continue to follow the federal requirements of the program, but also are committed to acting on the FHWA’s recommendations for improving this program.”

A copy of the FHWA’s full report is available at www.modot.org/ecr, including the specific safeguards MoDOT already has in place.

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A Place to Rest

Increases in Rest Areas and Truck Parking Keeps Drivers Safe

MoDOT continues to improve safety measures for commercial motor vehicle drivers. While states across the country close their rest areas and parking facilities, MoDOT keeps adding to the state's inventory.

Between 2002 and 2009, the number of truck parking spaces provided by MoDOT increased from 587 to 853, a 45 percent jump in nine years. Two welcome centers and more converted truck parking areas will create an additional 142 spaces for 2010. This parking space increase is vital for truck drivers who under federal law must leave the road and rest once a 10- to 11-hour workday is recorded. Drivers need truck parking or a rest area when they reach their



limit, and these places aren't hard to find in Missouri.

"MoDOT understands that for professional drivers to perform at their best, good rest is important," says Pete Rahn,

director of MoDOT. "Truck drivers work long days and deserve places along our roadways to park, relax and feel safe."

Special attention is given to truck and recreational vehicle parking when MoDOT builds or reconstructs interstate rest areas. For example, upgrades at Joplin (Interstate 44), Conway (I-44) and Eagleville (I-35) and plans for welcome centers in Marston (I-55) and Hayti (I-55) will add hundreds of additional parking spots.

"Motor carriers really appreciate how easy it is to find a place to rest," said Jan Skouby, MoDOT motor carrier services director. "That makes Missouri truck-friendly and helps keep shipping costs down, so we pay less at the store."

Keeping Our Customers Satisfied

When 2009 drew to a close, MoDOT had a lot of good things to brag about. Among them: traffic fatalities were down for the fourth straight year, we completed the massive I-64 project ahead of schedule and \$11 million under budget and we fixed 121 Safe and Sound bridges, with more to come.

These and other accomplishments have a direct impact on our annual customer satisfaction rating, which jumped to 85 percent last year. But we're facing a steep drop in funding for transportation, which means little new road and bridge

construction in the coming years. The challenge then becomes maintaining this level of customer approval, which is critical to building support for additional funding.

So that was the question put before senior managers when they gathered for their annual Strategic Advance on Dec. 15: what factors have driven our improvement the most?

Not surprisingly, they determined that first and foremost we must honor our commitments. In last year's Report Card from Missourians, 89 percent said

they trusted us to do just that. So while we're doing a good job in that regard, we have to look at how to sustain that trust.

The group identified the eight areas that have had the most impact on customer satisfaction:

1. Delivering fast and cheap projects
2. Providing smooth roads
3. Saving lives
4. Operating frugally
5. Marketing ourselves and providing useful information
6. Listening and responding

7. Improving visibility in rural areas and easing congestion in urban and suburban locations
8. Providing outstanding customer service

With these eight focus areas as a guide, the managers brainstormed strategies to help us continue to deliver excellent customer service in light of limited funding. A subcommittee has been tasked with taking the suggested strategies and producing a draft plan of action.

Fatalities Hit Record Low

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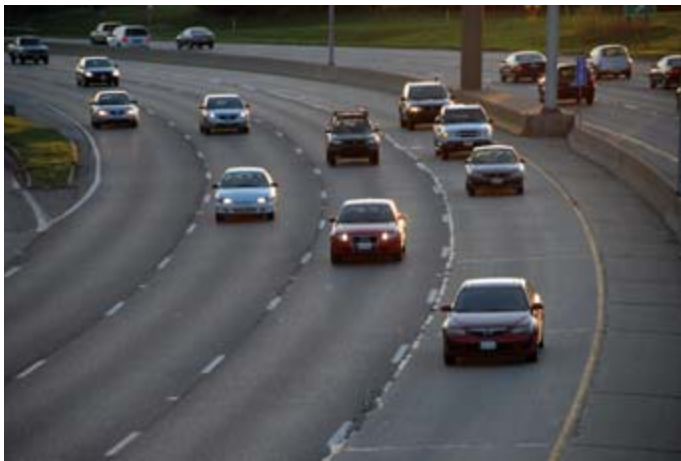
One of the top strategies for meeting the new goal is strengthening Missouri's seat belt law to allow for primary enforcement. A 2009 survey reported only 77 percent of Missourians are buckling up. The state's rate has been at a plateau since 2004

Amending the current law will also provide \$16.2 million in a one-time federal incentive grant to use for safety enforcement, education and engineering.

Other measures aimed at decreasing fatalities and serious injuries include focusing on topics like run-off road crashes, distracted driving, impaired driving, and new engineering solutions for decreasing traffic crashes.

"We will continue to look for innovative

ways to make our roads safer and to spread safety messages," Hillis said. For more information, visit www.saveMOLives.com. Buckle Up to Arrive Alive.



and remains consistently below the national average of 84 percent. A primary seat belt law would increase the usage rate saving 63 lives, 759 serious injuries and \$179 million in costs in the first year it goes into effect.

Ridership for Amtrak's Missouri River Runner increased by 16 percent in December 2009 over December 2008.



From now until March 13, spend \$50 on Missouri River Runner and earn 1,000 points on your Amtrak Guest Rewards! Register for Guest Rewards at www.Amtrak.com or by calling 1-800-307-5000. Use registration code 10910.

Flurry of Activity

MoDOT’s Fans and Followers Utilize Social Networks during Snow Storm

As the first major snow storm of the year kicked off in January 2010, many Missourians turned to MoDOT for travel information, such as calling 888-ASK-MoDOT or checking the online Traveler Information Map.

Commuters and travelers also relied upon some newer tools offered through social networking sites.

One of the benefits of using tools like Facebook and Twitter are that so many people regularly use the sites, and many access via mobile phones. This provides a strong opportunity for MoDOT to reach customers quickly and directly. Another benefit is the opportunity for conversation, and during the winter storms, that conversation focused on MoDOT’s work to keep roads as clear and safe as possible.

Several Facebook pages and Twitter accounts are available where users can connect – both through Central Office and multiple district and project-specific pages. As the January storm progressed, social networking sites were a great way to reach travelers with important road condition information and winter driving tips. It was also an opportunity to answer direct questions,

such as which roads are cleared first, where to find specific travel information and to alert district offices to specific areas needing attention.

In addition to weather and road condition updates, it gave Missourians a chance to express appreciation for the hard-working road crews. Below is a sample of comments received:

A message to all MODOT workers and your families - thank you SO MUCH for all the hours you have put in over the past three weeks as we have been hit with snow, ice and wind. You are very much appreciated by your "fans" here in NW Missouri!

You have done a wonderful job making the highways safe for us to travel to work!! Thank you!

Hang in there MoDOT crews! I know you all will work to the best of your ability to keep us all as safe as possible!

Check out MoDOT’s social networking tools for yourself. Visit www.modot.org and look for the icons in the upper right corner of the homepage, or visit <http://www.modot.org/newsandinfo/emodot/index.htm>.

Thanks so much MODOT for working around the clock and spending time away from your families to keep our roads safe!!

MoDOT Employees Make Highest Total Donation Ever

The spirit of giving is alive and well at the Missouri Department of Transportation. For the third year in a row, MoDOT was the top state agency in giving to the annual Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign - and this year with the highest total donation ever!

According to Office of Administration Commissioner Kelvin Simmons, MoDOT’s contribution of \$217,614 makes it the first state agency to sur-

pass the \$200,000 mark in the 25-year history of the campaign.

While MoDOT ranks fourth in employment among state agencies, its employees made up 23 percent of the total pledges made statewide.

“Your generosity continues to prove that when MoDOT employees pull together as a team, fantastic things happen,” said Director Pete Rahn.

Overall, Missouri state employees broke last year’s record contributions

by raising more than \$1.25 million for local, state and national non-profit organizations. More than 1,100 charities received pledges from state employees through the campaign this year.



Fundraising events coordinated throughout the state helped increase MoDOT’s support for the charitable campaign.

And the “Beet” Goes On

MoDOT Using More Beet Juice to Keep Roads Clear

Could you increase your vegetable intake by 700 percent? MoDOT has.

For the past few years, MoDOT has been using an anti-icing product called Geomelt made from sugar beets to help keep the roads clear. With several snow storms since mid-December, it has proved very useful.

also helps melt snow and ice once they are already on the roads.

Combined with salt, the beet juice freezes at a lower temperature than just salt alone so it can be used when the weather is colder - even at temperatures closer to zero. The mixture



Shaun Schmitz

"Anything that keeps roads safer during extreme temperatures and bad weather means more lives saved," said Jim Carney, MoDOT's state maintenance engineer. "Because of the great results we've seen using beet juice, we've increased usage almost 700 percent over the last couple of years."

MoDOT first started testing Geomelt in northwest Missouri in 2006, and uses it now statewide. In 2008, the department used 35,000 gallons of Geomelt. Last winter, 242,000 gallons were used. So far this year, at the end of 2009, 78,000 gallons of the juice assisted crews in fighting winter storms.

Beet juice is a natural product that works well when mixed with either rock salt or liquid salt brine to keep ice from forming on the roads before a storm. It reduces the corrosive properties of salt and improves its effectiveness. That means less salt, more efficiency and less equipment, bridge deck and vehicle corrosion.

The sugar beet juice is brown in color so salt mixed with it is somewhat brown. The liquid is a by-product of sugar production.

Annually, MoDOT spends approximately \$41 million on snow and ice removal. In 2008, approximately 3,500 dedicated employees spent more than 554,000 hours using the 1,650 snow-removal vehicles, which added up to \$43 million on snow and ice prevention and removal.

New video will work to reduce run-off-the-road crashes

by Reeve White

It only takes a split second for your tires to drop off the roadway and your life to flash before your eyes. A new public service announcement aims to educate the public on how to recover from run-off-the-road crashes without overcorrecting.

When a car runs off the road, many drivers initial response is to panic and overcorrect, causing the driver to lose control of the car. Run-off-road crashes result in 50 percent of all traffic fatalities.

“Overcorrection is what gets most people in trouble,” said Leanna Depue, MoDOT Director of Highway Safety. “We want to educate drivers on how to recover from these crashes safely.”

The PSA will direct the public to a longer instructional video at the www.saveMOLives.com Web site that will provide detailed instruction on how to correct your car safely once you run off the road.

The trick to protecting your life and the lives of others in these crashes is:

- Remain calm; don’t panic and over-correct.
- Keep a firm grip on the wheel.
- Ease off the gas and stay off brake.
- Turn your wheel 1/8th turn to the left.
- When you feel your tires hit pavement again, turn wheel 1/4 turn to the right.
- Now breathe. You just prevented a run-off-road crash.

The PSA will be sent to media outlets and distributed on the Internet Feb. 22 – March 7. It was a collaborative effort between MoDOT and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Meet Your Commissioners



This month, we learn more about Commissioner Duane S. Michie.

Q: Please tell us a little about your background and career.

A: I have a long career in banking and currently hold several banking positions: Chairman of the Board of First State Bank & Trust Co. Inc. in Caruthersville, President and Chairman of the Board of the First State Bank Corp., of Caruthersville.

I have lived in southeast Missouri all my life. My wife Sue and I live in Hayti and we have four children and six delightful grandchildren. Because my home county is on the Mississippi River, I have always had a special interest in ports on Missouri’s waterways; however, I have always had a strong interest in transportation resources all across the state.

Q: What attracted you to becoming part of the MHTC?

A: I had been and continue to be involved with the development of the

Pemiscot County Port Authority. As the chairman of the port authority in the late 1990’s I invited a new group called the Total Transportation Commission to come down and visit the port. The purpose of their visit was to help the port gain approval for a project that would build a four-lane road out of Arkansas to the port to generate and support a lot of truck traffic for the port. As a result of that visit, I was able to share my passion for growth and development along the river with everyone on the TTC, including a young man named Bob Holden, who later became the Governor. After he became Governor, he remembered his visit to the port and asked me to serve on the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. I gladly took the opportunity to serve on the MHTC to be able to share my excitement about transportation and economic development with others around the state.

Q: What has been your most interesting experience as part of the commission?

A: When I started as a commissioner, MoDOT was experiencing some tough times and struggling. A real plus has been watching MoDOT develop over the last five years into such a strong team, becoming so proficient and efficient. The growth of the management team as a whole and the motivation of staff – it has taken MoDOT in a very positive direction and I’m certain that stakeholders realize it.

MoDOT is a government agency that doesn’t act like a government agency. It is the equivalent of a thriving and growing business entity, some may say

similar to a Fortune 500 company. The quality service award MoDOT received in 2009 is proof of its winning business approach. This MoDOT team has done a great job of boldly taking on challenges and being the best it can be.

It has been such a rewarding experience for all of us serving on the commission to be a part of MoDOT’s success.

Q: What have you learned about Missouri transportation?

A: There was a great deal to learn when joining the commission, like how funding for transportation works and all of the various processes the department undertakes and follows. The most important thing I learned about was partnerships. In particular, I learned a lot about the planning process and how planning partners can really make a difference in prioritizing projects that are needed throughout the state. The planning process involves people from all around the state and develops the necessary partnerships and relationships to build the consensus that is necessary to have a successful transportation system in Missouri. Not only do we as commissioners build relationships and partnerships with each other, but we are able to form these relationships around the state along with our MoDOT partners and our planning partners and it is beneficial for everyone involved.

Q: Do you have a favorite Missouri destination?

A: I enjoy traveling in general; however, traveling with the commission and the MoDOT team across the state and visiting different communities each

month for our meetings has really been a highlight for me. I like to go everywhere and tour the communities and learn about their plans for transportation improvements. It’s wonderful to learn about how everyone is addressing their transportation needs through partnerships and development districts and a whole variety of other ways. It is so nice to see what others are doing and how creative some of the communities are at finding solutions to meet their transportation needs.

On a personal note, Missouri is a unique tourist destination state. It provides endless opportunities for family outings. My wife, Sue and I and three of our grandsons, Dustin, Skylar, and Tyler, have upon a number of occasions spent our weekends trout fishing at Rock Bridge. While at the time it seemed like a good idea to the old folks to take this trip, we had forgotten how many things can go wrong with young grandsons at ages ranging from 9 to 14 years old. Picture three young boys all clustered on a trout stream dealing with water filled waders, fishing poles that never seem to work right for them, tangled lines, sunburns, endless bathroom breaks, hunger, and comments like “I’m tired and I want to go home”; it seemed like the day would never end but we ended up with a few fish caught which was a surprise, surprise, surprise! Now, Sue and I can look at old pictures that were taken on those trips and say what a fun experience we had with those boys several years ago!

February Service Anniversaries

4

35 Years		Robert G. Buckman	D3
Thomas E. Howser	D5	Norman J. Holloway	D4
		David F. Tyrrell	D4
30 Years		John H. Stumberg	D6
Anthony V. Perkins	D2	Jeffrey A. Bohler	D6
Jeffery D. Wesley	D4	Karen L. Jennings	D7
Larry N. Warden	D6	Darren S. Thurston	D10
Ronald A. Schlett	D6	Michele A. Atkinson	CO
Henry A. Manes	D8	Sandra K. Riley	CO
		Pamela S. Lueckenotto	CO
		Deborah A. Barrett	CO
25 Years		10 Years	
David W. Deeds	D4	Richard K. Meyer	D1
Elizabeth Wright	D4	Gale E. March	D2
Michael A. Ward	D5	Jeffery W. Kroner	D2
Gary D. Balke	D5	Laura W. Tannehill	D3
Daniel H. Newton	D5	Aaron R. Magruder	D3
Glen P. Petersen	D6	Clem Anderson	D4
Larry G. Doelling	D6	Deborah J. Huffman	D4
William C. Fuller	D8	Shannon D. Johnson	D7
Brian D. Bard	D10	Frank O. Miller	D8
Todd J. Thieret	D10	Ryan E. Williams	D9
Judith M. Ruediger	CO	Ryan D. Miller	D9
		John W. King	D9
20 Years		Paul L. Keena	D10
Patrick W. Luebrecht	D3	Donnetta A. Cole	CO
Michael W. Belt	D5	Warren L. Blanchard	CO
Todd A. Roberts	D8	Ann M. Vaught	CO
Mike L. Wake	D9	Eric G. Bernskoetter	CO
Terry M. Ross	D10		
Lynn R. Lewis	D10		
15 Years		5 Years	
Carl D. Evans	D1	Travis D. Jenkins	D1
Brenda K. Harris	D2	Norval W. Snider	D2
Tammy S. Wallace	D2		

Stacy W. Thomas	D2
James L. Rockhold	D3
Micheal D. Maynard	D4
Jon M. Fischer	D5
Sara E. Nelson	D6
Jeffery P. Baird	D6
Melissa N. Kreisel	D6
James B. Antonacci	D6
Dwayne L. Lachance	D6
Marcus D. Parsons	D7
Patrick J. Mettlach	D7
Chad A. Mays	D7
Mary E. Black	D7
Shea N. Shaddox	D8
Robert D. Owens	D8

In Memoriam

Retirees			
Harold “Phil” P. Megee	D3	December 4	
Roger J. Shelton	D5	December 8	
Jimmy “Jim” C. Chilton	D9	December 12	
Don W. Slayden	D1	December 18	
Edgar P. Schedler	CO	December 21	
Floyd R. Barker	D7	December 21	
Kathy J. Stickley	D4	December 21	
Robert C. Foppe	D6	December 22	
Bernard H. Jincks	D1	December 22	
Roddy D. Meier	D4	December 23	
Delmar L. Meyer	D4	December 26	
Raymond Estes	D7	December 30	

December Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
December Retirements:		
Willie Robinson	D10	31
Larry Moore	D2	10
Billy Pearce	D2	31
Johnny Fry	D3	32
Kurt Kluesner	D3	29
Lynn Parks	D3	31
Randall George	D4	30
Roy Raithel	D5	30
David Thuli	D5	31
Steve Booth	D6	24
Donald Jackson	D6	30
Chris Stone	D6	30
Larry Dill	D8	16
Jerry Russell	D8	27
Cheng Jin	CO	18



Central Office

Socks for Marines

“No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.” - Aesop

A pair of socks might not seem like much, but for those serving in Afghanistan and Iraq, some goodies from home and the chance to replace the socks you’ve worn for the past week or two can be a real blessing.

The Environmental Studies and Historic Preservation section recently helped Marines in Afghanistan and Iraq keep their feet more comfortable on the job.

Employees began gathering funds for socks because of a student council

initiative at Lewis and Clark Middle School in Jefferson City called “Socks for Marines”. The project was important to Larry Ayres, senior historic preservation specialist, because his son Grant serves with the Marines and recently finished a tour in Iraq. Grant has noted that socks are a welcome and important need for those serving.

“When Grant went through boot camp and we were looking at him deploying, we knew we would want to send pack-



Volunteers put together packages for their Marine loved ones at the National Marine Parents Headquarters in Columbia, Mo.

ages,” said Ayres. “I found the Marine Parent’s Web site and this seemed like the perfect way to help our son.”

Ayres and his wife, Beth, have been involved with the National Marine Parents Organization headquartered in Columbia, Mo., and have participated in packing shipments to the soldiers. They began working with the school to collect donations.

Ayres’ coworkers donated enough money to buy almost 90 pairs of socks,

helping the student council reach their goal of providing at least 1,000 pairs – in fact, the students boxed 1,100 pairs, each rolled up with a poem written by one of the students. The socks were packed at the Marine Parents headquarters and mailed Jan. 9.

For more information or to donate to future shipments from Marine Parents, visit www.MarineParents.com.

Next Generation Passenger Trains



Executive committee members are (left to right) DJ Stadtler, Amtrak’s national chief financial officer, MoDOT’s Rod Massman, Bill Bronte, California DOT, and Mario Bergeron, Amtrak’s national chief mechanical officer.

Rod Massman, MoDOT’s Administrator of Railroads, has been selected to serve on Amtrak’s national next generation passenger train equipment committee. The committee had its first meeting in January in Washington, D.C. At the meeting, Massman was elected as secretary of the executive committee (pictured).

The committee will work to set standards for rail equipment, such as coach cars, as well as for the locomotives to pull them. Up until now, no single national standard for all passenger rail equipment has been in place, contributing to the lack of manufacturers willing to construct the equipment, procure-

ment problems, and maintenance issues when many different types of equipment are present on the same train.

The group will establish national standards and then work to procure the necessary equipment.

Missouri has already applied for Recovery Act funding for train equipment. Playing a role in the design of the equipment to be purchased will benefit the state.

“If we’re involved up front with design selection, we’ll be more pleased with the end result,” said Massman.

Massman was recommended for the committee by the States for Passenger Rail Coalition.

Outstanding Service Award

Steve Billings honored for Dedication, Effort and Commitment

Steve Billings was voted by his peers to receive the Multistate Transportation Assistance Program 2009 Outstanding Service Award.

MTAP is an activity within the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials’ Standing Committee on Public Transportation.

Founded in 1987, the primary purpose of the technical assistance program is to help states implement Federal Transit Administration programs, provide feedback to FTA on implementation issues and to create a professional network.

Billings, administrator of transit for the Multimodal Division, was recognized



Steve Billings

for his dedication, effort and commitment in providing comments on the numerous FTA rule-making initiatives over the past five years that helped create a greater link between MTAP and the FTA.

Billings worked with MTAP since 2001 and has found the networking opportunities very useful.

“It’s great to have these groups so we can benefit from best practices of other states,” said Billings.

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D1

Northwest

Snow

by M. Elaine Justus



Rick Kemerling

MoDOT crews continue to widen secondary routes even into the new year. Route B in Atchison County is where this photograph was taken by Maintenance Superintendent Rick Kemerling. Many county roads continued to remain closed endangering people and livestock.

Like the rest of the state, the story for the Northwest District in December, 2009 (and into 2010), was snow and lots of it. People who track weather for a living tell us our recent series of snow events left more snow behind than we have seen in the last two decades. Worst of all, the largest of the storms was scheduled to hit us right at Christmas. If it had not been for the help of our friends from other districts, it could have been a lot more difficult than it was. Districts 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10 scrambled to our rescue, sending personnel and equipment in one of the largest pre-need deployments MoDOT has ever organized and implemented.

“The willingness of almost 100 people from all over the state to give up precious holiday time with their families to help other families in need was impressive,” said District Engineer Don Wichern. “Every qualified Northwest District employee, and every operating piece of machinery we had, was out there on our state routes trying to make a difference in whiteout conditions. Working side-by-side with out-of-district volunteers made us realize the true meaning of ‘One Team MoDOT.’ On behalf of the entire workforce of the Northwest District, we thank you.”



Lawrence J. Schumer

Lawrence Schumer of District 10 took this photograph during the blizzard that hit the Northwest District over Christmas 2009. The minimal lighting and soft focus of falling snow made a pretty sight.

for more info

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As this issue goes to press in January, the Northwest District is once again digging out from another significant snowfall. Although it was not necessary to close the Interstates, as it was over Christmas, there were several days when the secondary routes were

totally impassable, creating a hardship for families and farm animals. MoDOT crews have been working continuously trying to get lettered routes open to even one lane of traffic. We have our fingers crossed that we will be seeing warmer weather soon.

Wooden Culvert

by M. Elaine Justus



Bill Bledsoe

MoDOT crews were surprised to find such a well-preserved wooden structure under one of our roads recently.

We really enjoyed reading about the “Last Wooden Culvert” in District 3 in the December 2009 issue of *Connections*. Imagine our surprise when our crews went to check out a report of erosion on Route P in Clinton County and found our very own wooden culvert. We won’t say it’s the “last” because we suspect there may be more. It appears to be a solid construction made up of 4x4’s and railroad ties. Like District 3’s example, it dates from around 1937. This one is not as large, though, and was only used for drainage and not the movement of livestock. Initial inspections show that it is still structurally sound, but water running under the

culvert has washed out the ground underneath and caused the entire length to twist. Seventy-three years is a pretty fair life expectancy. We’re hoping the corrugated metal piping that replaces it this summer will function as well and as long.



Bill Bledsoe

Water under the wooden structure caused it to twist, making replacement a necessity.

The View From The Road

by Holly L. Murphy



Holly L. Murphy

You’ve heard of seahorses, race horses, sawhorses, and charley horses, but have you ever seen a snow horse? We have. This life-sized recumbent equine sculpture was seen from U.S. 169 in Gentry County in the town of King City. He must have jumped his snow fence and drifted into the front yard of the neighbors’ house.

D2

North Central

One Step Closer

Just before the end of the year another section of Route 36 opened to traffic –12 miles from Macon to Clarence, including the Clarence interchange.



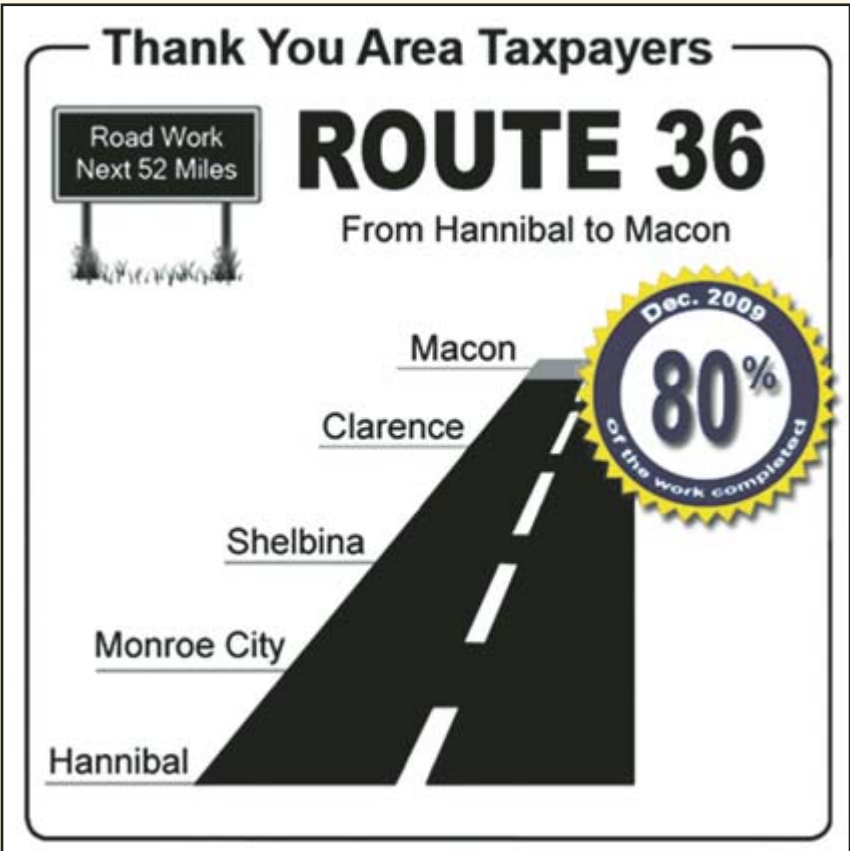
Thad Requet - Shelby Weekly

This opening gets us one step closer to realizing a four-lane corridor across

the state, and means the entire project from Hannibal to Macon reached the 80 percent completion mark.

The opening went well, according to Resident Engineer Jeff Gander. “We had everything in place and when we began switching traffic onto the new lanes, motorists did a good job of driving slow and using caution,” said Gander.

The contractor is continuing to move forward with construction from Clarence to Shel-



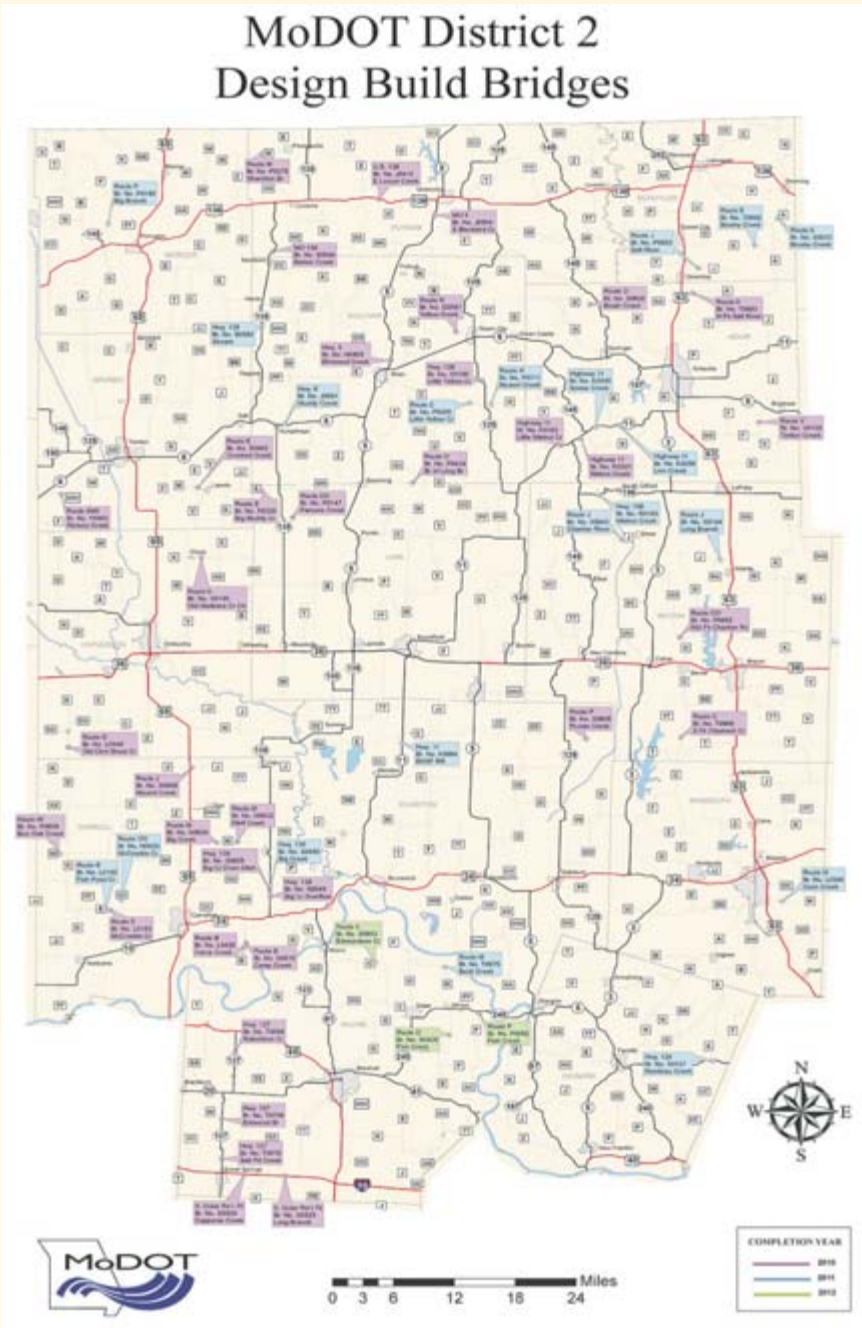
bina, including the Cardinal Connector (pictured left).

The section east of Shelby is planned to open next spring and the entire corridor open to four lanes by July 2010.

Plans are underway for a celebration next summer.

Construction photos and updates can be found on the web site at www.modot.org/northcentral.

District Ready for Phase II - More Safe & Sound Coming



The work schedules are approved and the district is more than ready to welcome the second phase of the Safe & Sound Bridge Program, the KTU Contractor’s design-build plan.

“We have been patiently anticipating KTU’s final schedule” said Safe & Sound Field Engineer Preston Kramer, “and we are ready to roll with it. This is going to be unlike anything we’ve ever done in the district and it is very exciting.”

The three-year schedule calls for bridge replacements to 59 bridges in the district; 36 in 2010, 20 in 2011 and three in 2012.

According to Kramer, with the work starting in March and the bulk of the replacements in 2010, it averages about four bridges being completed each month for the rest of the year.

Although it is hard to read all of the details on each bridge from the map (left), you can still get a good sense of the wide-spread coverage this program has on the district.

The bridges in purple will be completed in 2010, those in blue in 2011 and the green in 2012. Having this many bridge-

es replaced will have a very significant impact on the system.

Last November, Kramer, the district’s Safe & Sound coordinator, became the regional contact to work with KTU for the projects in District 2 and District 3. “Preston has been involved significantly in Safe & Sound from the beginning, and he will be a great asset in making this program successful,” said Assistant District Engineer Kevin James.

With the aggressive 2010 schedule, KTU plans to open a satellite office in the district at Chillicothe. Once that happens Kramer will be spending the majority of his time working out of that office or out in the field.

Under the first phase of the program, the modified design-bid-build contracts, 16 bridges were selected for rehabilitation. Of those, 11 have been completed, one is under construction, two are under contract for construction in the spring, and the remaining two will be under contract within the next year.

You can find the map and project information at www.modot.org/northcentral.

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No Lost Work Days in 2009!

It’s all about working safely, and that’s just what district employees did last year, giving us bragging rights to say that the district had no lost work days in 2009. Congratulations to everyone for working safely last year!

We are also counting down from the last documented lost time accident, which happened early in 2008. The district is currently at 23 months and counting. Keep up the good work!

D3

Northeast

Tasty Reward for Crews

It's people like Jim and Debbie Buckman that make plowing snow on Christmas a lot easier.

All employees who work winter operations in Palmyra, Canton, Monroe City and Paris are receiving a free 6-inch Subway sandwich every time they have to go out ... compliments of the Subway restaurant owners.

"We are just so appreciative of what they do, leaving their families to make sure our roads are safe," Debbie said. "Even on Christmas!"

The day after Christmas, Buckman and her husband decided they wanted to make sure the crews were rewarded. "It's the least we can do," she said. "We travel all over northeast Missouri to our restaurants, and we are truly thankful MoDOT works so hard to keep the roads cleared during winter weather."

"It was a nice phone call to get," said Customer Service Representative Vicki James, who worked the Saturday after Christmas on the radio and phones. She relayed the good news to Maintenance Superintendent Randy Shubert, who then called Buckman. "What a terrific surprise and a great way to say thank you to the crews," he said.

A communication process has been arranged among the Buckmans and the maintenance superintendents of those buildings to make sure all employees who are working get the free sandwich, every time.

Tony Morrall, Canton maintenance supervisor, enjoyed one of his free sandwiches recently. He and others from the Canton building personally thanked Debbie and Jim for their generosity. "It's good to know we are appreciated, and a free Subway sandwich is a tasty reward," Morrall said.



8 Debbie Buckman, owner of Subway in Canton, gives Scottie Cockrell his free meal as a token of thanks. She and her husband, Jim, provided all crews in Canton, Paris, Palmyra and Monroe City free sandwiches for keeping the state roads cleared during the winter.

City of Mexico Proclaims MoDOT Appreciation Day

It's not that often MoDOT gets its own day. Yet, that is what happened in December. "MoDOT Appreciation Day" was officially proclaimed by the City of Mexico for Dec. 11, 2009. The recognition luncheon included construc-

tion, maintenance and district office staff, and state and local leaders were in attendance to show their support. Bruce Oliver, president of Progress Mexico, coordinated the event, which included a formal proclamation read by Mayor Virginia Robertson.

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Around the District



It may have been dicey at times, but expertise prevailed and a new radio tower at the district office was installed in December. Using a crane to lift and place the sections of the tower, Mercury Communication employees successfully completed the project that was coordinated by Senior Electrician Mike Laks. This tower replaces two old towers from Hannibal and Monroe City and has worked well during the several snow events.



Christina McCloskey, a sophomore at Community R-VI High School, was the December winner of the \$25 gas card donated by Ayers Oil, Inc., for the Drivin' Clean at 16 program. She is pictured with Sgt. Doug McPike with the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Audrain County Sheriff Dan Miller and School Superintendent Arlen Provancha.



Lunch 'n Learns have become a welcome addition to the lunchroom table in the Northeast District. Presented by the Work Life Center, these sessions are free to employees and have included topics like planning for retirement, legal issues, and the most recent one "Getting the most out of your health/life insurance benefits."

Hoops and Bridges Score

There are a lot of tools in the public information toolbox, and high school basketball games are included. "With all the Safe & Sound bridge work coming up and the decreased participation in traditional public meetings, we have been utilizing existing scheduled events to take the show on the road, so to speak," said Community Relations Specialist

Tana Akright. By setting up a table during events at high schools, for example, a few hundred have the opportunity to easily access information about upcoming road closures for bridges, as well as other road work in the area.

"We have had excellent participation at the high school basketball games," Tana said.



Andy Long, highway designer, prepares displays that are used during community briefings and public meetings.

Virtual meetings have also increased "attendance," not only for bridge briefings, but other significant road work. "Even in rural areas, we are getting up to 10 times the number of participants online as we are at a traditional meeting," Tana added.

D4

Kansas City Area

Hope When it Counts the Most D4 Reaches Out to the Community

by Kerri Lewis

Several employees with District 4 showed how MoDOT cares when they adopted families for Christmas through the Hope Network. The Hope Network reaches out in love to those in the community needing help with food, clothing, shelter, medical care transportation and emergency assistance through a network of local resources. And D4 employees became one more resource, another avenue, a glimmer of hope for families in the area to lean on.

When faced with the opportunity to help families in need, the D4 family jumped in and asked “how can we help?” Divisions including Adminis-



tration, Right of Way, Business and Benefits, Planning, and Construction and Materials each adopted a family to make Christmas brighter. And the



Madison stands more than excited about the gifts under the tree.

giving didn't stop there. An additional 25 boys and girls received gifts through even more donated items. These gifts provided smiles on many faces and hope for many in need.

An example of one of the families in need:

Michelle Carney is a 27-year-old single mom of three; 9-year-old Chase,



Eric Thompson, ROW, sits next to Michelle Carney and her daughter Madison after delivering their gifts.

5-year-old Keegan, and 3-year-old Madison. She lives in Pleasant Valley and is fighting stage 2 breast cancer. She has been undergoing radiation treatments and has been unable to work for several months. Family and friends were able to provide her with a Christmas tree and help with the household bills, but the need in this family was significant. Twelve employees from D4 Right of Way pooled together resources, bought clothes and toys for the kids, plus a gift card for Michelle, all totaling \$600. When the gifts were delivered, there was not one present under the tree. However, when the group left after delivering the gifts, the tree was full and faces were smiling.

The significance of the gifts to these families was overwhelming. **Here are a few words of thanks:**

“I thank you so much. The kids really liked their things. You all put a smile on their face that I haven't seen in a long time. Everything that was given was truly a blessing. It's not always the big things that matter, so often the smallest things make a big impression. I thank you again.”

“My name is Angel Rose and I am one year old. I really, really, really want to thank you for helping my daddy give me the best Christmas I could have this year. I really like all the toys and clothes you brought out to me. I was so happy when I got to rip all that Christmas paper off and find sur-



prises inside. That was so much fun. See it is just me and my daddy and my daddy is on disability so right now Christmas would have been hard. So I guess what I'm saying is without your generosity and thoughtfulness I would not have had a really great Christmas. Me and Daddy say ‘God Bless You’. You made a little girl very, very happy. Thank you for being you.”



Another ARRA Project Done

by Kerri Lewis

D4 completed an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project for the Clay County area. Work included enhancements along Route 1 between Vivion Road and 72nd Street in the cities of Gladstone and Kansas City, Mo. MoDOT, state, county and city officials celebrated the completion of these improvements along Route 1 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Dec. 4.

Improvements include the addition of new sidewalks and pedestrian



accommodations at intersections to improve safety, increase mobility, and provide better access for pedestrians



Mayor Carol Rudi, Gladstone, talks about the great partnership between MoDOT and the city. Sharon Taegel, assistant to the district engineer, stands beside her.

in the area. In addition to the sidewalk improvements, the city of Gladstone provided a bus shelter near the intersection of Route 1 and 72nd Street to enhance the riding experience for the many riders using the services of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority.

Thanks to speedy work provided by Musselman & Hall Contractors, LLC. from Kansas City, Mo., the Route 1 sidewalk improvements were completed on time and within the \$1.2 million budget.

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D5 Central

Bridge Attachment to Bring Katy Trail Access to Jefferson City

by Holly Dentner

Cyclists and pedestrians familiar with the Katy Trail know that access into Jefferson City can be tricky, since it requires traveling over the busy Missouri River Bridge.

Starting next spring, work will begin on a new bridge attachment that will provide convenient and safe access for pedestrians and bicyclists between the Katy Trail and downtown Jefferson City.

MoDOT has partnered with the Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri State Parks Foundation, and the City of Jefferson to construct the \$7 million project.

The new structure will be attached on the eastern side of the U.S. 54



Area Engineer Alan Trampe describes the bridge attachment at a public meeting held on Dec. 15.

bicyclists and pedestrians will descend to ground level on a ramp structure and will travel underneath the bridge to make their way to the Katy Trail.

Once construction begins, it will take about a year to complete. Motorists can

anticipate some impact to traffic during construction. Plans are still tentative, but lanes may be narrowed or one lane may close on the eastbound bridge to allow adequate room for work crews and equipment.

About 30 people attended a public meeting held on Dec. 15 to discuss plans

for the new bridge attachment. Another 84 people logged onto www.modot.org/central to take part in an online public meeting.



A rendering of the view from one of the observation areas on the proposed bridge attachment.

eastbound/U.S. 63 northbound Missouri River Bridge. It will be eight feet wide and will have two observation areas where people can stop and enjoy the views of the Capitol and the Missouri River.

On the south side of the bridge, the attachment will be accessed from a sidewalk that begins at Main Street. On the north side of the bridge,



The ramp structure on the north end of the bridge has a gradual slope that is ADA compliant and designed to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

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District Employees Sacrifice Holidays for Snow Fight

The winter weather that arrived in December wasn't anything out of the ordinary for the Central District. It was bitterly cold, but it only snowed a few inches. There wasn't any freezing rain. Just another day on the job? Exactly. Except it came on Christmas Eve and lasted for several days.

Every maintenance building had crews on duty throughout the entire holiday weekend. The customer service center remained active 24 hours each day, meaning employees were at the district office monitoring the radio, updating the Traveler Information Map, and taking calls from customers wanting road conditions.

More snow came the following week, and many employees found themselves on duty on New Year's Eve. As usual, our employees were prepared and ready to deal with the winter weather.



Shaun Schmitz

Motorists depend on MoDOT to travel across Missouri highways, especially during the holiday season. Many employees worked around the clock and put forth the extra effort we needed to handle the situation. To all those who adjusted their plans and worked through the holiday, thank you for your hard work and dedication to your job.

Environmental Studies Move One Step Closer to Completion

by Holly Dentner

Long before any excavation or paving begins, MoDOT must determine the best plan for roadway improvements by carefully considering the impact they could have on the natural and man-made environment.

The most complex planning classification is called an environmental impact statement, which determines the study's purpose and need and ends with a preferred alternative for roadway improvements. The Central District has been in the midst of three of these studies that are now nearing completion.



The East Columbia Environmental Impact Statement establishes a preferred alternative for the area between Interstate 70 south to New Haven Road and from U.S. Route 63 to east of Route Z. Its purpose is to address traffic congestion and safety and to improve access to eastern Columbia by completing major highway links between the city and Boone County.

The final version of the study, which was submitted for public comment in January, determined that Route 740 (Stadium Blvd) should extend from Route 63 along a new alignment to the St. Charles interchange on I-70. It also recommends improving Route WW (Broadway) from Route 63 to Olivet Road, using the existing alignment.

The Rex Whitton Expressway Environmental Impact Statement recently published its draft findings for public comment. Its purpose is to find a way to reduce congestion and improve



safety on a busy section of Route 50/63 through downtown Jefferson City.

The study proposes a full diamond interchange at Lafayette Ave., roundabouts at the existing Clark Ave. interchange, and an overpass on Madison Street. The study is still in the draft stage, so this alternative may be modified as the study team works toward a final version. The comment period for the draft study ends on Feb. 22, 2010.

While the East Columbia and Whitton Expressway studies were conducted using an outside consultant, the U.S. Route 63 Environmental Impact Statement is the first to be managed entirely by MoDOT staff.

The study area encompasses 47 miles of Route 63, from just south of the Route 50/63 junction in Osage County to just north of Rolla in Phelps County. MoDOT hopes to ease congestion, improve safety, and provide four-lane continuity along the Route 63 corridor.

The preferred alternative would relocate sections of Route 63 on new alignments and improve the existing alignment in various locations. MoDOT submitted the final version of the study to the Federal Highway Administration in late 2009 and expects to conclude it in early 2010.

While there's currently no funding to construct the improvements recommended by the three studies, having them complete means that MoDOT can quickly move forward with design and construction if funds become available. All three documents are available for review at www.modot.org/central.



D6

St. Louis Area

District 6 Maintenance Lends a Hand

by *Falon McCain*

Toys weren't the only things being delivered on Christmas Eve. Snowfall and wind gusts swept the District 1 area at alarming rates over the holiday weekend. Twenty-four District 6 crew members volunteered to assist in clean-up and maintenance efforts.

With one to three inches of continuous snowfall, 15-foot-deep snow drifts and 50 to 60 mile-per-hour wind gusts, District 1's Rockport Maintenance Superintendent Rick Kemerling couldn't believe the St. Louis crew was able to accomplish what they did under such harsh conditions.



District 6 employees have exemplified our One Team value, as well as being responsive and courteous, honoring our commitments and being flexible.

"I've never seen a snow storm like that in my career at MoDOT," said Jeff Halbert, District 6's maintenance supervisor for the Broadway building. "We just about had it cleared and another snowfall came down. We had to lean into the constant winds and our mechanics were only able to work a few minutes at a time."

Brad Meyer, maintenance supervisor for Gray Summit building, considered the four mechanics to be the "biggest asset to the team" because of the numerous equipment problems they encountered.

Halbert praised everyone's efforts. "At night we had zero visibility north of mile marker 99 into Iowa," he said. "Those were some rough conditions, but all our crew members did an excellent and outstanding job. I couldn't have asked for a better crew. I'd go anywhere with them."

The District 6 volunteers left the St. Louis area at 12 a.m., on Christmas Eve and returned the following Monday. The team worked around the clock punching holes through wind drifts to get highways opened up to one lane, and check-

ing on motorists who were stranded on medians or in ditches.

On Christmas Eve night, the highway patrol closed Interstate 29. Motorists were warned they were traveling at their own risk. MoDOT teams worked tirelessly to keep the highway passable beyond the last truck stop in Rockport for those who were determined to travel that night. Many motorists were forced to spend the night at the Rockport truck stop because conditions had gotten too bad.

The District 6 crew members were "welcomed with open arms" by every-

one in District 1.

"That's a great group of men and women," said Halbert. "We didn't know the roads and they watched out for us and took care of us. They kept us fed with crock pots of stew and chili. If they ever needed help again, I'd go back."

Meyer agreed. "We were well-received by District 1. They were happy to see us and we were glad to be there," he said.

MoDOT is proud of the District 6 crew and amazed at how they tackled this challenge, including the district's St. Louis City Maintenance Superintendent Larry Doelling.

"I'm glad those guys got the opportunity to experience something like that," said Doelling. "They did a heck of a job and learned a heck of a lot. I'm extremely happy for them. It took a lot to give up their Christmas weekend. All I can say is wow!"

Brad Meyer
Chris Barnwell
Duane Whiteman
Jim Holdmeier
Curtis Dunekey
Donald "Kerby" Bouse
"Bill" Lewis
Doug Graf
Jeff Fluchel
Rich Fennwald
Tyson Watson
Steve Clemons

Devon Ribley
Frank Tidd
Joe Penson
Jerry Lyston
Caleb Foster
Jeff Halbert
Patty Breece
Ryan Gray
Eric Pogue
James "Brian" Antonacci
Larry Johnson
Matt Keim

MoDOT Signs Main Span Construction Contract

by *Andrew Gates*

MoDOT has now signed a contract to construct the main span of the new Mississippi River Bridge.

The Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission awarded the Mississippi River Bridge main span contract to a joint venture from Massman Construction/Traylor Brothers/Alberici Constructors for \$229.5 million during a special Dec. 30, 2009 meeting.

The decision was made in agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation.

"We're excited to be moving forward with this needed project," said Kevin Keith, P.E., the Missouri Department of Transportation's Chief Engineer.

"The important thing to remember is this bridge dramatically improves safety, relieves congestion on the Poplar Street Bridge and provides alternate routes through the region. Additionally, the overall bridge project will promote economic growth regionally," Keith added.

The joint venture is thrilled to have the job, according to Mark Schnobelen, project sponsor for the Massman/Traylor/Alberici joint venture.

"We are looking forward to working with (the two Departments of Transportation) on this exciting project that will greatly enhance safe transportation in and around the St. Louis Metro area and will add an interesting new element to the downtown St. Louis skyline," said Schnobelen. "The idea of having the opportunity to build a cable stayed bridge with the second longest span in the country and with pier towers 400 feet tall is a challenge that any bridge builder worth his salt would relish."

The lowest bid for the main span contract was about \$39 million higher than expected. Additional funding comes from savings on the overall river bridge project, \$11 million from the I-64 construction project and bond savings.

"We anticipate some significant savings on the remaining portions of the project from innovative value engineering concepts," said Gregory Horn, P.E., Mississippi River Bridge project director.

"These concepts helped us design a bridge that met the regional requirements for traffic flow and safety, while providing excellent value to the taxpayers of Missouri and Illinois," added Horn.

Awarding the main span contract was one of the most critical elements of more than 30 projects associated with the Mississippi River Bridge, said Horn, since the main span will take nearly four years to construct.

"We will be working in the river an extremely long time," he said. "It will be about two years before people see the foundations for the two river piers rise up out of the Mississippi."

To get to this point, Horn commends the team of people who have worked the last 18 months to design the project.

"To get here, we've had a great partnership between MoDOT and IDOT," the project director said. "The design efforts of our prime consultants were exemplary, but we are exceptionally happy with their efforts to include disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) as subcontractors. So far, DBE subcontractors have received more than 30 contracts and contributed significantly to the success of the project."

Horn expects these efforts to include DBEs to continue, as the DBE goal for the new Mississippi River Bridge main span is 18 percent. This aggressive goal means approximately 18 percent of the money the prime contractor gets for the project – more than \$42 million – will be paid to minority- or woman-owned businesses. This goal is based on the availability and willingness of certified DBE companies to accomplish certain tasks on the project. Since the construction of the main span is very specialized, the goal required the contractor to be innovative and expand their use of DBE companies. Additionally, MoDOT and IDOT have included a possible \$3.5 million incentive to encourage the contractor to be socially and environmentally responsible, with the desire that this will increase overall diversity throughout the project.

"The MTA team is a great choice for this project because this team brings together three of the most respected general contractors and marine specialty companies in North America," said Schnobelen. "Together the MTA team represents more than 250 years of heavy civil construction experience with particular expertise in marine and cable stayed bridge construction as well as significant St. Louis Metro area knowledge."

MoDOT and IDOT anticipate awarding the contract for the Missouri Approach in February, and awarding the contract for the Illinois Approach sometime in late spring 2010. The main span of the bridge is expected to be complete and open to traffic in January 2014.

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D7

Southwest

District 7 Hosts Diversity Awareness Workshop

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

District 7 is home to a growing population of Hispanics. That’s why in mid-December, the district hosted the first ever diversity awareness workshop, conducted by the Central Office Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division



Dee Powell describes her Hispanic and American Indian heritage while Rudy Nickens observes.

(EODD). The workshop focused on Hispanic culture, its growth in America and common cultural misconceptions. Volunteers from across the district attended and sampled Hispanic-American food, discussed cultural etiquette in the workplace and English/Spanish language translations.

Dee Powell, District 7 customer service representative, serves as the chair of the statewide Diversity Committee.

“Two key values the committee uses to guide us are: MoDOT will value diversity because we believe in the power of our differences, and MoDOT will treat everyone with respect because we value their dignity,” Powell said. “With those values in mind, EODD created the Diversity Awareness Program to educate and inform our MoDOT family about the different aspects of diversity and its positive influences.”

As this new program grows, EODD will include other cultures and diverse influences.

“We chose the Hispanic culture as our first workshop because of the growing population in this region,” said EODD Director Rudy Nickens. “We’re working on the next topic, and it could be the German culture or Hmong culture. We’re not just going to focus on Hispanics, but on all people.”



Members of EODD include Rudy Nickens, Chelsy McDowell, Linda Clevenger, Stefan Denson and Tiffany Martin, pictured with Paul Today, center.

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Praise for Clear Roads



Rick Peck, McDonald County Press

A MoDOT snow plow clears snow and ice from Route NN in McDonald County.

We think our crews did a great job clearing the roads after the Christmas and New Year’s storms, and so do many travelers. Here are their words of appreciation:

• I wanted to tell you how impressed I’ve been with the road conditions.

The winter storm could not have come at a worse time. I dreaded my Christmas morning travels from McAlester, Okla. to Neosho, Mo. The road conditions in Oklahoma were terrible – almost impassable. In a 120-mile stretch of road, we estimated there were close to 100 vehicles that needed roadside assistance. That stretch of road also took us four hours to navigate.

However, when we crossed the Missouri line on I-44, it was immediately clear. The difference between Oklahoma and Missouri road conditions was like night and day. At 2 p.m. on Christmas Day, traffic was moving at close to normal speeds.

And my sister’s family had the same experience as they traveled on Route 71 out of Arkansas into Missouri. At the state line, it was immediately clear with just a few snow patches.

Please forward my compliments to all District 7 employees who had to sacrifice their Christmas vacation days. It is very obvious that MoDOT greatly values the proper maintenance of their roadways. The citizens of Missouri should be very proud of the philosophy that MoDOT exhibits.

Sincerely,
David Hukill

• From Information Systems Director Mike Miller: I’ve never been prouder of MoDOT. My wife and I left Wichita on Route 54 Dec. 26 to go back home. Route 54 in Kansas was increasingly snow packed as we headed east. In fact, just before the border near Ft. Scott a car went off the road into the ditch; the road was almost completely snow-packed and icy. Upon crossing into Missouri, 54 was dry pavement! We resumed normal speed and it was like it had never snowed! Congratulations on an excellent job!

• From Gary Gilmore of Springfield: Well, you guys need to teach your counterparts in Oklahoma how to plow and treat streets during a storm. I-44 in Oklahoma was 35 mph, single lane, ice covered. Whammo, at the Missouri state line: all lanes and shoulders completely clear and dry. A gold star for MoDOT. Thanks again.

• From a happy customer: It took us five hours to get from Tulsa to Joplin on I-44 over Christmas. As soon as we got to the state line, it was perfectly clear. Thank you so much! I am sorry you all had to work on Christmas, though.

• Joplin Globe columnist Mike Pound wrote in his column: On Sunday, Dec. 27, I drove up to Kansas City. On the way, I noticed how clear Highway 71 was. I wondered how many men and women it took, working on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, to make that possible.

I hope all the men and women who gave up holiday family time this Christmas know how much the rest of us appreciate what they do.

• An anonymous customer said: We want to thank the Anderson barn for the great job they are doing at keeping the roads clear of snow and ice. We live on East Hwy 76 just east of Route 71, and it’s a comfort knowing that in the morning we will be able to make it into work because of the hard work they are doing.

• From Bill Miller of Goodman: Tell the engineers or whoever thought up using beet juice to clear roads: ‘Atta boy/girl!’

• Sgt. John Cyrus with the Missouri State Highway Patrol: Just wanted to say thanks to MoDOT and District 7. The Mt. Vernon, Monett, Phelps and Greenfield crews did an excellent job with the snow removal over New Year’s and kept us accident free. I reported to work Wednesday morning ready to work accidents, however, due to the efforts of the local crews, I did not have to do that. They always do an outstanding job, the supervisors are easy to work with and I appreciate it.

D8

Springfield Area



Bob Edwards

District 8 at Work

1. Mountain Grove Maintenance Worker Adam Contreras checks a spreader before plowing Route 95 near Mountain Grove. Inset: Plowing Wright County Route N is Mountain Grove Maintenance Crew Leader Bill Freeman.

2. Intermediate Procurement Agent Andy McNeill juggles phone calls for salt shipment orders as he writes a request for proposals for a spray de-icing system for bridges.

3. Tearing down a dump truck engine to be repaired is Senior Equipment Technician Johnny Hall working in the Bolivar shop. The truck, plowing snow on Christmas Day, broke down after the engine's cam bearing went out, bending a push rod and knocking out a cam sensor.

Extreme Cold Challenges D8 Snow-Clearing Crews

by Angela Eden and Bob Edwards

The New Year brought extreme weather not seen by District 8 maintenance crews in many years. Temperatures for several days reached highs of only 5 to 10 degrees, with 0 to -5 degree lows. Winds hit 35 mph to 40 mph at times and blew moderate amounts of snow, 5 to 8 inches in places, into drifts across roads.

Conditions created challenges for workers and their equipment the last week of

December and the first week of January as they worked to clear roads in two storms that closely followed snow that fell Christmas Eve.

District Maintenance Engineer Dave O'Connor said information for coping with the frigid temperatures was shared among districts and passed along to snow-clearing crews.

"People were prepared," O'Connor said. They dressed in layers, took breaks to

warm up and made sure to carry food and water with them as they plowed.

Truck breakdowns in the cold kept the district's mechanics on the road day and night, an effort that drew praise from all maintenance superintendents.

"I owe them a big pat on the back," said Buffalo/Bolivar Area Maintenance Superintendent Johnny Mathews, noting that quick repairs got several of rigs quickly back into service.

A major problem that had to be overcome was slow pumping of diesel fuel which had thickened inside above-ground tanks, General Services Manager Brad Leonard said.

To speed up refueling in some areas, different fuel filters were installed on pumps and fuel was purchased at commercial stations with underground tanks.

Teamwork Produces '0' Work Hours Lost Due to Accidents

by Bob Edwards

Teamwork and watching out for one another are the keys to District 8 completing 2009 with no work hours lost to injury, District Safety and Health Manager Gary McLarry said.

Everyone has a role to play in safety, McLarry said. "We're not in this alone."

District Engineer Kirk Juranas said the safety record is important not only to workers but to their families as well.

"I think it's great," District Engineer Kirk Juranas said, adding, "We're going to have to help each other keep this going."

Also shutting out lost-time injuries in 2009 were District 2, District 3 and

Central Office. District 8 lost no work hours due to injury in 2005.

Keys to preventing injuries in 2009, McLarry said, included:

- Improved equipment inspections and preventive maintenance.
- More discussions with supervisors and employees when safety issues arose so that problems were quickly assessed and corrected.
- Making sure that 100 percent of district employees went through all required training on equipment and safety procedures.

In 2010, the district will continue to emphasize the need to set work zones that take traffic flow into account,

McLarry said. Traffic must be kept from backing up beyond the work zone signs to better protect workers and travelers.

Safety efforts also will focus on:

- Keeping work areas clear of clutter,

mud and snow to prevent tripping, slipping and falling, the leading type of injury recorded in 2009.

- Employing "team lift" or proper equipment to move heavy objects and prevent back and arm strains.

13

Charitable Campaign Summary

Senior General Services Technician Richard Gardner and Land Survey Supervisor Rick McCallister completed their second year as leaders of District 8's Employee Charitable Campaign, with the district recording the highest per-capita donation rate – \$41.81 – among all districts for the second year in a row.

Through paycheck deductions and special fund-raising events, the district raised \$20,947.66 for 2010, the second highest total among all districts. Only District 6 had a higher total – \$27,131.92.

District Engineer Kirk Juranas congratulated District 8 workers for their

willingness to give.

"This will be so important to those who receive these donations in the coming days and months," he said.

The new District 8 volunteer leaders working on the 2011 campaign are Senior Financial Services Technician Debbie Horne and Legal Executive Assistant Holly Riggs-Matthews.

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D9

South Central

First Snows of the Season

Crews from the South Central District were well prepared for the first snowfalls of the season. While most stayed near home during the winter event, 18 employees were sent to District 1 to help battle the elements in the north over the Christmas holiday. District Maintenance Engineer Chris Rutledge said those efforts were admirable.

“The effort of these crews, and the families they left for Christmas, is applauded and appreciated by MoDOT and the traveling public,” said Rutledge.

Employees from D9 worked out of two D1 maintenance facilities in blizzard-like conditions to help clear state roads dealing with up to 8 inches of snow and drifts on roads up to 3 feet deep.

MoDOT forces worked for two days to clear major highways and plow remaining routes in frigid temperatures during the next D9 winter event. Strong wind gusts and light drifting complicated cleanup efforts. With sub-zero temperatures remaining around parts

of the district, some routes had to wait for more warmth and sunshine for days before being cleared.

The storm provided the opportunity, however, for District 9 to test its first tow plow. According to Rutledge, the test was successful. “This learning experience will aid in the effective use of the tow plow, as it’s recognized as an important asset in providing timely and safe clearing operations of roadways during winter storms,” he said.



Intermediate Maintenance Worker Scot Shockley takes the tow plow for a spin.

Curtis Matthew Long Memorial Bridge Dedication

The friends and family of Curtis Long gathered on the cold afternoon of Dec. 30 to dedicate the Curtis Matthew Long Memorial Bridge. Representative Mike Dethrow, who sponsored the legislation naming the structure on Route 60 near Van Buren, Mo., also attended.

Curtis Long built log homes for a living, was a volunteer firefighter and a bluegrass musician. He was on his way to a bluegrass jam session on Jan. 25, 2008 when his vehicle was struck by a charter bus. The phrase “Can You Hear Music” was included on the signage by his widow, Angela, to honor his reverence for music.



Angela and Hoyce Long

District 9 Coalition Reduces Roadway Fatalities

Unofficial totals indicate that roadway fatalities in South Central Missouri dropped by more than 22 percent in 2009. There were a total of 74 fatalities in D9’s 13 counties last year, down from 95 in 2008. The greatest reductions were among those over age 55 (25 percent) and those under 21 (40 percent).

South Central Regional Coalition Coordinator Kelly Martin said she is

pleased with the results. “It’s obvious that our concentrated efforts are paying off. This year’s decrease in fatalities is a significant improvement over last year’s 14 percent reduction. Although we have come a long way, there is still much work to be done,” she said.

This is the first full year District 9 has had one, full-time coordinator managing the direction, budget and activities of the regional coalition. Martin placed a greater focus on law enforcement this year; increasing grants by \$25,000. “The emphasis on law enforcement has helped to purchase much needed equipment for our local agencies, and provide overtime enforcement. Combined, these efforts have helped to make our roadways safer,” she said. Martin met with law enforcement agencies this year to explain the grant process and answer questions from enforcement personnel.

Martin attributes much of the success in fatality decreases to volunteers.

Training was provided for interested coalition members to explain the various programs the South Central Regional Coalition for Roadway Safety offers and how their skills can best be utilized. “I believe the success of our coalition lies with the many dedicated volunteers we have serving our region,” she said. “Improving safety on our roadways cannot be achieved alone, it is definitely a team effort. Some of our members are interested in teaching our elementary youth programs, others are interested in running demonstrators. There are opportunities for everyone

who is interested in making a contribution,” Martin said.

In addition to existing successful university partnerships, Martin also focused on additional outreach this year. Partnering with Fort Leonard Wood, church camps and private organizations for education. “We are always looking at ways to improve our efforts. New programs created within our region are making huge impacts locally, and soon may be implemented statewide. I look forward to continued success in South Central region,” said Martin.



Certified Appraiser Lisa Durnell teaches Raymondville students about buckling up.

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Charitable Campaign Increases Donations



Charitable Campaign Coordinators Barb Conner and Marsha Lovan proudly display a plaque D9 received for increased donations. District 9 increased donations per capita by 93 percent since last year.

D10

Southeast

Lending a Helping Hand:

District 10 Crews Assist During Winter Storm

Over the Christmas holiday, 30 Southeast employees made the trip to District 1 to assist with plowing snow. The D10 employees left at 2 a.m. on Christmas Eve and many of the employees did not return home until Dec. 26. Their dedication and commitment to MoDOT was greatly appreciated...

*Keith (and D10),
Thank you and your crews so much for your help this past Christmas weekend. Your efforts were greatly appreciated and a testament to the MoDOT employees statewide. Your crew's efforts are even more amazing because of the time they missed with family and friends during the holidays.*

Please pass a special thank you to the employees that gave up their holiday to spend it in Northwest Missouri plowing snow. We really appreciate the help and hope we can return the favor in some way in the future.

Also, thanks for the use of the graders that you left behind. We are using them and are glad to have them.

Again, Thank You, Thank You!!!

*Charlie Roach
D1 Maintenance Superintendent
Maryville Area*

D10 employees that helped include: Maintenance Crew Leader Jeff Amelunke, Regional Maintenance Supervisor Ronnie Ballew, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Joe Boggs, Senior Maintenance Worker Tom Brickhaus, Senior Maintenance Worker Scott Bronenkant, Senior Maintenance Worker Charles Corlew, Senior Equipment Technician Duane Fish, Maintenance Superintendent Keith Gentry, Maintenance Worker Mark Hager, Maintenance Crew Leader David Herbst, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Billy Holmes, Maintenance Crew Leader Chris Huffman, Maintenance Crew Leader Gary King, Regional Maintenance Supervisor Scott Lesslie, Maintenance Crew Leader Jeff Mabury, Senior Equipment

Technician Dallas McRoy, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Corey Menz, Maintenance Worker David Mosby, Maintenance Worker Reggie Null, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Charlie Rose, Maintenance Crew Leader Terry Sanders, Senior Maintenance Worker Gilbert Scherer, Regional Maintenance Supervisor Lawrence Schumer, Senior Maintenance Worker Danny Sisson, Maintenance Crew Leader Kim Smith, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Donnie Terbrak, Maintenance Crew Leader David Tropf, Maintenance Crew Leader Terry Walker, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Dean Wethington, Senior Maintenance Worker Ron Wilson.

*D10 Crews,
I want to thank all of our folks that volunteered to help District 1 over the Christmas holiday. Our crews worked some very long hours and I never once heard anyone complain. We have some of the most dedicated employees in the state, right here in District 10. They did a fantastic job!*

*Thank you,
Keith Gentry
D10 Maintenance Superintendant*



Lending a helping hand: Thirty Southeast District employees plowed snow in the Northwest District over the Christmas holiday.

The Southeast Good Samaritans

Good works are all around us. Many acts of kindness go unheard of, though sometimes, we do get the opportunity to take a moment to 'brag' on those that have gone out of their way for others. This is one of those times...

Recently, Senior Right of Way Technician April Brock was asked by a friend to try to do some "internal investigations."

"This friend of mine was the victim of dog theft here in Sikeston," said Brock. "The crime was reported to the local authorities, but nothing came of it."

What does this have to do with D10 MoDOT, you might ask?

"Well, you see, Wesley, the little terrier, was my friend's little dog that went everywhere with him," said Brock. "Wesley was taken from his yard, and apparently escaped from whomever had stolen him. Wesley was found on Route HH, about a mile east of the 61/HH/ZZ intersection, where he had been hit by a vehicle. He was probably trying to get back to his home in town. Someone took the time to stop and check the dog's tags and called the local veterinarian's number listed. The vet's office,

in turn, contacted my friend, the owner. And then, my friend wanted to be able to thank the 'MoDOT Good Samaritans' that went out of their way to help."

So as you might guess, April Brock began her 'internal investigation' to try to find the 'Southeast Good Samaritan,' and was successful with her search.

"I found out who our Good Samaritans were," said Brock. "It was our very own Jill Feters (Risk Management) and Tim Williams (Sikeston Maintenance). The dog had been hit and Jill knew that Tim was coming to the office, so Jill asked Tim if he would move it out of the roadway. Tim moved the dog and brought Jill the dog tag. Jill then decided to call the vet's office, who then called the owner."

Jill said she just didn't want the owner to worry any more.

Thank you Jill, Tim and April!

Recent Retirees



Keith Pritchard retired Jan. 1 after 31 years with MoDOT. Pritchard was a Regional Maintenance Supervisor.



Karen Williams retired Jan. 1 after 32 years with MoDOT. Williams was a Senior Office Assistant.



Jerry Stewart retired Feb. 1 after 25 years with MoDOT. Stewart was a Senior Construction Technician.

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Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



Please share this publication and recycle it after reading.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



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Where did the desktop shortcuts go?

As the Information Systems division continues to roll out Next Generation Desktop, you will notice a number of changes. One of those changes is that familiar desktop shortcuts are no longer in place. These shortcuts were created to make it easier for you to access these applications. You can still get to these applications easily by accessing the “MoDOT” directory located in All Programs.

With the increase in requests for placing shortcuts onto the desktops growing, it was necessary to better manage them. Continuing to place them directly on the desktop would have created a multitude of icons, which would make them less effective for ease of use. Also, many users would remove the icons to reduce the number only to find at some

point that they needed it. Placing these links in the “MoDOT” directory will aid in consistency and maintenance of links.

Users can continue to create their own desktop shortcuts for the links they frequently use. The shortcuts can easily be placed on your computer desktop. Click the Start button in the lower left of your screen. Select All Programs to open the “MoDOT” folder. Move your mouse cursor over the application name. Using your mouse’s right click button, select “Send to”. Choosing “Desktop (create shortcut)” will post the familiar icon on your machine’s desktop.

For more information on Next Generation Desktop, visit the NGD webpage on the MoDOT intranet.



Preserving Missouri’s Environment and Culture

New Web Site is a Doorway for Citizens and Honors Important Legislation

by Matt Hiebert

MoDOT’s responsibilities go beyond building roads and bridges. The department must also be a vigilant steward of Missouri’s environment and historical culture.

Because of the nature of its work, MoDOT encounters many opportuni-

ties to preserve and protect elements of Missouri’s culture and natural resources. The Environment Studies and Historic Preservation section is dedicated to making these opportunities successful.

While the two arms of the section tackle problems of a different nature, both are focused on protecting the things that give Missouri its identity. They preserve the things that make Missouri ... Missouri!

The group is recognizing an important date this year.

In 1970, President Nixon signed the National Environmental Policy Act into law. NEPA was one of the first environmental laws enacted, setting forth goals “to encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment.”

“To acknowledge the 40th anniversary of NEPA and demonstrate our commitment to environmental responsibility, we’ve expanded and relaunched our Web site,” said Gayle Unruh, Environmental Studies and Historic Preservation manager. “It now better reflects

the work we do in Environmental Studies and Historic Preservation.”

The new web site covers many responsibilities of the section. Visitors can learn about how MoDOT studies and addresses air quality, community impacts of projects, endangered species, Missouri archaeology, historic bridge preservation, noise pollution and, of course, NEPA compliance.

“Our new Web site is a doorway for citizens to learn about what we do,” Unruh said. “Protecting our environment and preserving our historical culture are just as important as building and maintaining our roads and bridges. The new site shows people what we do and tells them why.”

To learn more about MoDOT’s Environmental Studies and Historic Preservation section, visit www.modot.org/ehp.

